SYNOPSIS

ON

A STUDY OF EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION IN RELATION TO COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIOR AND TASK PERFORMANCE ACROSS THE SERVICE SECTOR

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Prof. B.K Punia

HSB, GJUS&T, HISAR

Submitted By

Radhika Girdhar

Roll no. 190100090106

Haryana School of Business

Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology,

Hisar- 125001 (Haryana)

Name of the Student: **Radhika Girdhar**

Roll No: **190100090106**

Name of the Dept: **Haryana School of Business**

Subject: **Business Management**

Name of the Supervisor: **Prof. B.K. Punia**

Haryana School of Business

Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology, Hisar-125001

1. TOPIC OF RESEARCH

A Study of Employees' Organizational Identification in Relation to Counterproductive Work Behavior and Task Performance Across the Service Sector

2. INTRODUCTION

In the current era where there is high competition and rapidly changing situations, an organization can survive only if its employees identify themselves as a part of organization and consider organization goals as their own goals and try to achieve them with full dedication. Organizations are complex organisms and have various differences in the form of departments, values, desires, ideas and personalities which make them unique. In the same way, individuals within a specific organization are different from each other in the form of different views, personalities, ideas about the world and business. Basically, organizational identification (OID) is the degree with which the organization and the employees share the same values, goals, desires and aims.

For a brief understanding, think about a football team which involve coaches and players and all are working together for achieving a common goal, which is to win the game. Now, if the team is the organization and the individual players are the employees, just think what would happen if each player had their own unique values or goals for the team. What if those goals didn't match what the coach wanted? It would certainly create a problem as the players would be going towards

one direction while the coaches would want them to go in another. In this scenario, success does not seem likely. So, this is why organization want their employees to identify with the its goals and values so they have a better chance of working as a team and to win.

Organizational identification is a specific form of social identification (Gautam *et al*. 2004). It is defined as the extent to which an individual identifies him/ herself with an organization; the organization provides the individual with a sense of identity (Ashforth and Mael 1989). Organizational members are said to identify themselves with the organization when they define themselves as part of the organization.

It is this implication of the self-concept (Pratt, 1998) and perception of oneness (Ashforth and Mael, 1989) that distinguishes identification from related constructs like person–organization fit and organizational commitment: one identifies with a specific organization (and would feel a deep existential loss if forced to part) whereas one may discern good fit with a set of similar organizations and could come to feel committed to any of them.

Organizational Identification can be differentiated into four dimensions which are cognitive, affective, evaluative and behavioral aspect.

The study shows the relationship of organizational identification with job ambivalence, counterproductive work behavior and task performance of employees**.**

Job ambivalence is defined as the simultaneous existence of equivalently strong positive and negative evaluations of one's job. Such conflicting evaluations may result from positive and negative beliefs or emotions with regard to an individual's job. Specifically, job ambivalence may result from job related beliefs that are associated with conflicting (positive–negative) evaluations, from the experience of both positive and negative emotions, or from an evaluative conflict between beliefs and affective experiences.

Counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) are an important type of unethical behavior in organizations (Braun *et al.* 2018; Lee *et al*. 2019), and have been defined as "distinct acts that share the characteristics that they are volitional (as opposed to accidental or mandated) and harm or intend to harm organizations or organization stakeholders, such as clients, coworkers, customers, and supervisors" (Spector *et al.* 2006,) whereas,

Task performance is defined as work behavior that is related to "… the organization's technical core, either by executing its technical processes or by maintaining and servicing its technical requirements" (Motowidlo *et al.* 1997), and it is typically viewed as fundamental or in-role responsibilities that employees are hired to perform in exchange for their compensation packages (Rousseau and Parks, 1993).

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE: -

3.1 Organizational Identification

Organizational members identify with the organization when they define themselves at least partly in terms of what the organization is thought to represent. It is this implication of the self-concept (Pratt, 1998) and perception of oneness (Ashforth and Mael, 1989) that distinguishes identification from related constructs like person–organization fit and organizational commitment: one identifies with a specific organization (and would feel a deep existential loss if forced to part) whereas one may discern good fit with a set of similar organizations and could come to feel committed to any of them. The more an individual identifies with a particular social group, the more he or she perceives a sense of "oneness with or belongingness to some human aggregate" and invokes "us" or "we" language when referring to a group instead of "they" language (Ashforth and Mael 1989).

It is important to note that just as individuals may be satisfied with their jobs at the global or molar level ('I am satisfied with my job') and at the facet-specific level ('I am satisfied with my co-workers'), so too many individuals identify with their organization at the global level ('I identify with IBM') and with specific aspects of the organization ('I identify with IBM's innovativeness'). For example, Dukerich, *et al.* (2002) found that the organizational identification of physicians with their respective medical systems was predicted by the perceived attractiveness of specific aspects of those systems (e.g., bottom-line focus, state-of-the art medical technology, quality care for patients).

According to Tajfel (1981), three dimensions of identification with a group or organization are as follows: -

(1) a cognitive component, which is the knowledge of a certain group membership

(2) an affective component, which describes the emotional attachment to this group and

(3) an evaluative component which is the value connotation assigned to that group.

(4) Phinney (1991) introduced fourth component which is a conative or a behavioral component is used to describe participation in actions which are relevant for the group, such as participation in organizational normative behaviors or in ethnic ingroup behaviors.

Interest in identification within the organizational context has grown considerably over the last decade, as it has emerged as an important variable in organizational behavior research (for reviews, Pratt, 1998; Rousseau, 1998; Whetten and Godfrey, 1998). Identification has important implications at the individual, group, and organizational levels. Specifically, organizational identification has been found to be positively associated with performance and organizational citizenship behaviors, and negatively associated with turnover intentions and actual turnover (Abrams *et al.* 1998; Bartel, 2001; Bhattacharya *et al.* 1995; Haslam, 2001; Mael and Ashforth, 1995; Pratt, 1998; Tyler, 1999; Van Knippenberg, 2000; Wan-Huggins *et al.* 1998). Organizational identification has also been argued to help foster a sense of meaning, belonging, and control at work (Ashforth, 2001). Given these outcomes for organizations and individuals alike, organizational identification is typically viewed by scholars and practitioners as a desirable attachment made by individuals to their employing organizations. Others, though, have explored the so-called 'darker side' of organizational identification (Dukerich *et al.* 1998; Elsbach, 1999; Michel and Jehn, 2003). This perspective is concerned with the potential negative effects of identification on both individuals and organizations. For example, an 'overidentified' individual can become completely consumed by work and thereby lose a sense of individual identity, or might be less able to see faults of the organization or less willing to point them out.

3.2 Organizational Identification and Job Ambivalence

Job ambivalence is defined as the simultaneous existence of equivalently strong positive and negative evaluations of one's job. Such conflicting evaluations may result from positive and negative beliefs or emotions with regard to an individual's job. Specifically, job ambivalence may result from job related beliefs that are associated with conflicting (positive–negative) evaluations, from the experience of both positive and negative emotions, or from an evaluative conflict between beliefs and affective experiences. With regard to beliefs, for instance, a person may hold that some job facets (e.g., supervision, communication, nature of the work itself) are adequate, but may hold that other facets (e.g., pay, promotion opportunities, job security) are not adequate. With respect to affective experiences, a person may feel happy, enthusiastic, and proud (i.e., positive affect);

but also feel frustrated, worried and disappointed (i.e., negative affect; for empirical data supporting this line of reasoning, by Fisher, 2000).

Also, this suggests that there may be individuals who are ambivalent toward their jobs; that is, they hold both positive and negative evaluations, given the presence of both positive and negative affect or the presence of both adequate and inadequate job facets. However, there may also be individuals who are rather indifferent toward their jobs. That is, they have a neutral job attitude, given the absence of both positive and negative affect, and the absence of both any job facets they view as adequate and any job facets, they view as not adequate.

Theories of individuals' self-definition suggest that employees seek to express and act in line with their self-concepts mainly when they feel clear and certain about their self-views (Campbell *et al*. 1996; Schuh *et al.* 2016). If their self-concept is clear, individuals feel sure of their self-views, and this sense of confidence allows them to focus on and act in line with their inner goals and motivations (Setterlund and Niedenthal 1993). In contrast, if they feel less clear about their self-definition, they are less likely to act in line with their goals and motivations (Conner and Armitage 2008). These dynamics may also apply to the interplay between organizational and ambivalent identification. Specifically, for employees who identify with their firm *and* who have low levels of ambivalence toward their firm, the organization is a central *and* clear part of their self-definition (Kreiner and Ashforth 2004). They should therefore feel particularly confident about their membership of the organization and thus more motivated to refrain from actions that may harm the firm and, by extension, their own self-concept as a member of the organization (Mael and Ashforth 1992). So, research showed that the more, employees identify with the organization, less they will be ambivalent towards their job.

3.3 Organizational Identification and Counterproductive Work Behavior

Counterproductive or Unethical behavior can have major consequences for organizations, and can lead to lower organizational efficiency, reduced collaboration between teams and coworkers, and weaker employee motivation and satisfaction (Cialdini and Trost 1998; Hollinger and Davis 2006; Harris and Ogbonna 2006). Counterproductive work behaviors are an important type of unethical behavior in organizations (Braun *et al.* 2018; Lee *et al*. 2019), and have been defined as "distinct acts that share the characteristics that they are volitional (as opposed to accidental or mandated) and harm or intend to harm organizations or organization stakeholders, such as clients, coworkers,

customers, and supervisors" (Spector *et al.* 2006,). According to Robinson, 1995, deviant workplace behaviors vary along two dimensions: minor versus serious, and interpersonal versus organizational. On the basis of these two dimensions, employee deviance appears to fall into four distinct categories: production deviance, property deviance, political deviance, and personal aggression. They include stealing materials from an employer, claiming pay for more hours than have actually been worked, purposely wasting supplies, and intentionally harming coworkers (Dalal 2005). Such behaviors clearly violate established moral and social norms (Jacobs *et al.* 2014; Vardi and Weitz 2004), and can be viewed as a sign of employees' immoral intentions or unethical attitudes (Fida *et al.* 2015; Jacobson *et al*. 2019). On the basis of this theoretical perspective and the empirical evidence reviewed above, researcher argue that organizational identification thus provides employees with the motivation to refrain from engaging in counterproductive work behaviors toward the organization and their colleagues. If employees identify with their organization, they will

(a) be less likely to engage in behaviors that may threaten it (such as stealing or wasting materials or polluting the workplace). Sabotaging actions toward the organization will have a negative impact on their own self-concepts as members of a "good" and "successful" organization. In addition, if employees identify with their organization, they will

(b) be less likely to engage in counterproductive acts against their fellow colleagues (such as ignoring or undermining them). Highly identified employees place much importance on their membership of the organization, and coworkers are primarily seen as common ingroup members who should be supported and not harmed (Ashforth and Mael 1989). This negative link between organizational identification and counterproductive work behavior should be significantly stronger when employees experience low levels of ambivalence toward their organization. They will be more certain of their positive "oneness" with the organization and their own self-definition in terms of their organizational membership. Thus, it is argued that only in the absence of ambivalence will identification reduce counterproductive work behaviors. This view is consistent with two important theoretical arguments.

First, theories of individuals' self-definition suggest that employees seek to express and act in line with their self-concepts mainly when they feel clear and certain about their self-views (Campbell *et al*. 1996; Schuh *et al.* 2016). If their self-concept is clear, individuals feel sure of their self-

views, and this sense of confidence allows them to focus on and act in line with their inner goals and motivations (Setterlund and Niedenthal 1993). In contrast, if they feel less clear about their self-definition, they are less likely to act in line with their goals and motivations (Conner and Armitage 2008). These dynamics may also apply to the interplay between organizational and ambivalent identification. Specifically, for employees who identify with their firm *and* who have low levels of ambivalence toward their firm, the organization is a central *and* clear part of their self-definition (Kreiner and Ashforth 2004). They should therefore feel particularly confident about their membership of the organization and thus more motivated to refrain from actions that may harm the firm and, by extension, their own self-concept as a member of the organization (Mael and Ashforth 1992). In contrast, high levels of ambivalence can mean that the mixed feelings that employees experience toward their organization dilute the negative association between identification and counterproductive work behaviors, because ambivalent employees should be less confident about their self-views as organizational members. Accordingly, at times they may do what is good for the organization, and therefore good for their own self-view, while at other times they may feel less certain about their self-definition and then become somewhat disengaged from the organization, which may increase the likelihood of counterproductive actions (Vadera and Pratt 2013).

Second, resource-based theories suggest that ambivalent identification may require considerable energy and mental resources, which may further weaken the link between organizational identification and counterproductive work behaviors (Kuhl and Beckmann 1994). Individuals who experience conflicting impulses have been found to be more hesitant and less persistent in their actions (Thompson *et al.* 1995) because ambivalence, which is the sense of being torn between conflicting impulses, is generally experienced as aversive and employees seek to resolve this conflicting state (Ashforth *et al.* 2014). Thus, a sense of ambivalence is likely to require resources that could be directed toward acting in line with one's self-definition and toward refraining from negative behavior directed at the organization or its members (Marcus and Schuler 2004).

Overall, a high level of ambivalence causes employees to experience contradictory thoughts and feelings toward the organization, and they will be less sure of the extent to which their self-concept is defined by their membership of it (Pratt 2000). Accordingly, the mitigating effects of organizational identification on counterproductive work behaviors will be weaker.

3.4 Organizational Identification and Task Performance

Task performance speaks to the proficiency with which employees carry out the core requirements of their jobs, such as those tasks that are specified in a job description (Motowidlo *et al* 1997; Murphy, 1989). Further more Motowidlo *et al.* 1997 said that, Task performance is defined as work behavior that is related to "… the organization's technical core, either by executing its technical processes or by maintaining and servicing its technical requirements" and it is typically viewed as fundamental or in-role responsibilities that employees are hired to perform in exchange for their compensation packages (Rousseau and Parks, 1993). Addition to this, task performance constitutes behaviors that contribute directly or indirectly to the technical core of the organization. Creative and innovative behaviors by individuals should enhance task performance as the behaviors are introduced to solve a workplace issue (Walberg and Stariha, 1992).

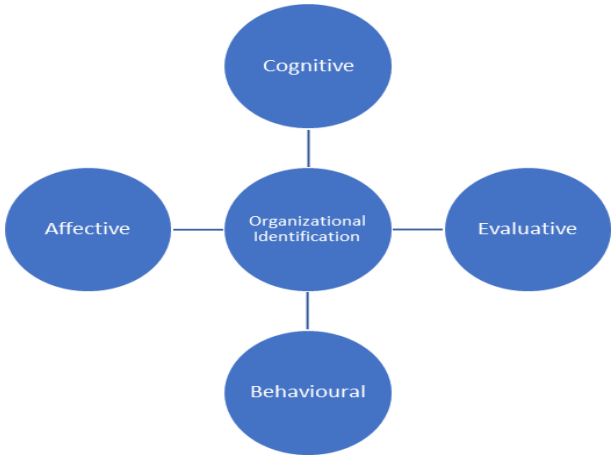
According to (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002) a meta-analytic study, a distinction in types of performance has been made based on the work of Organ (1988), who argues that job performance is multidimensional and is comprised of two types of behavior: in-role/task performance that is prescribed by the firm or its representatives and discretionary work behaviors that lie under the control of the employee (e.g., pro-social behaviors (Puffer, 1987), citizenship behaviors (Podsakoff *et al.* 1990). Borman and Motowidlo (1993) further added in Organ's premise by distinguishing between task performance and citizenship behavior. Also, Wenlong Liu *et al.* 2020 suggested that both transactional and relational psychological contract fulfillment can directly affect gig workers' task performance and also indirectly affect it via organizational identification.

Through review of literature, it is expected that Organizational identification possess the positive relationship with task performance of employees which means that higher they identify themselves with the organization, higher will be the task performance and vice versa.

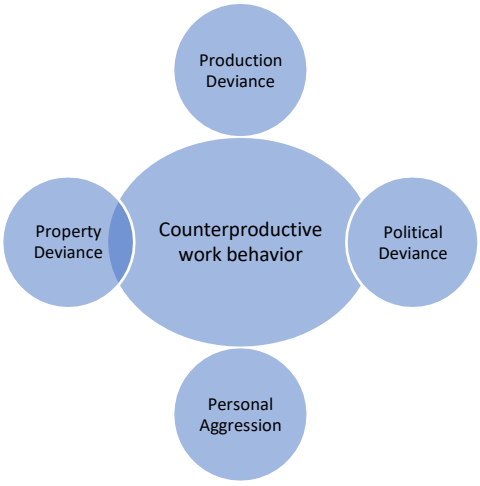
PROPOSED RESEARCH MODEL

The proposed research model shows the relationship of different variables which are Organizational identification, job ambivalence, counterproductive work behavior and task performance.

Organizational Identification Dimensions: -



Counterproductive Work Behavior Dimensions: -



4. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY AND GAP ANALYSIS

After reviewing the literature, the researcher found that most of the research studies that discussed above have been conducted in foreign countries and there is less study of organizational identification on employees and their unlawful attitude, on counterproductive work behavior, job ambivalence and task performance in India. Various studies are conducted on all the above-mentioned variables. There are also many studies which show the combination of two or three variables but there is not any single study of job ambivalence and organizational identification on counterproductive work behavior and task performance and hence necessitates the further exploration on these variables in a relative manner because most of the studies are conducted in foreign countries instead of India and all the studies consider only single terms at a time or the combination of any two terms together but not even a single study is found which focuses on the relationship of all these terms together at the same time. Thus, the current study will focus on role of organizational identification to check the counterproductive work behavior and task performance of employees across the service sector in India.

The study will focus to answer the following research questions:

1. How do employees identify themselves with the organization?
2. What is the level of Job Ambivalence among employees of different organizations?
3. Is there any relationship between Organizational identification and Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB)?
4. What is the relationship between Organizational Identification and Task performance?
5. What role does Job Ambivalence play in Organizational Identification and Counterproductive Work Behavior(CWB)?
6. What is the interaction effect outcome of Organizational identification, Job ambivalence and Task Performance?

5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main aim of the research is to study the Organizational Identification, Job Ambivalence, Counterproductive Work Behavior and Task Performance of employees in the service sector. However, the specific objectives of the proposed research will be as under: -

1. To study the relationship of Organizational Identification with Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB).
2. To check the relationship of Organizational Identification with Task Performance.
3. To examine the presence of Job Ambivalence among employees of different organizations.
4. To examine the role of Job Ambivalence across Organizational Identification and Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB).
5. To assess the interaction effect outcome of Organizational Identification, Job Ambivalence and Task Performance.
6. To propose a model for enhancing Employees' Identification to their organizations with least Job Ambivalence & Counterproductive Work Behavior and increased Task Performance.

6. RESESRCH METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology is the specific procedure or technique used to identify, select, process and analyze the information about a research problem. In a research paper, the methodology section allows the readers to critically evaluate the validity and reliability of the study. The methodology section answers two main questions. How would the data be collected and how is it be analyzed? In the methodology process, the researchers acquire deep knowledge about the problem and make conclusion for suggestions. So, it plays a vital role in research problem.

6.1 Research Design

The research design is theoretical outline of the methods and techniques for collection, measurement and analysis of data. In this study, descriptive research design will be followed by an exploratory research design.

6.2 Sampling Design

The universe of the study is large enough and hence entire universe of the study cannot be surveyed. Therefore, keeping in view, the different constrains of the research, the sample size of the study is proposed to 500 employees across the service sector which involves banking and financial service, hospitality, hospitals, IT sector etc. The sample size can be increased or decreased according to requirement of the study. Sampling design will make a mix of random and convenience sampling from the study area.

6.3 Research Instrument

The present study calls for gathering primary data due to its specific requirements. The primary data will be collected with the help of a well-structured questionnaire which may also include some specific scales available on the research variables.

6.4 Statistical Tools

The collected data will be analyzed and interpreted with the help of statistical tools and techniques as per the requirement of the study.

7. TENTATIVE CHAPTER SCHEME

The tentative organization of the study i.e., chapter scheme will be as under:

Chapter -1: Introduction

Chapter-2: Literature Review

Chapter-3: Research Objective, Hypothesis and Research Methodology of the study.

Chapter-4: Analysis and interpretation of data.

Chapter-5: Finding, suggestions and conclusions of study.

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Signature of Supervisor **Signature of Candidate**

Signature of Chairperson/Director